

VOTE - Voter Outreach Through Education
Washington Secretary of State

CURRICULUM GRADES 5-7

TEACHER: LESSON 5

THEME: VOTING MAKES A BETTER SOCIETY

This is a project that could be completed by students from grades 5-7. A number of ideas and activities are presented in five lessons to form one complete civics curriculum. Individual teachers are free to add, subtract, or edit as they wish, depending on their interests, time constraints, and local conditions.

ACTIVITY:

Develop two sides to an issue of interest in your community. This issue could be a bond issue, a zoning issue, or opposing candidates for office. Assign students to one of the two sides and have them develop arguments to "swing" people to their side. When everyone has had an opportunity to present their side, have the class vote by secret ballot. (See Student Lesson Five)

After the election, discuss the ramifications. Now that we have a "winner," what does that mean? Students need to understand that voting is not just about winning and losing. It is about creating a better society. People who vote help decide what is "better."

Desired outcome from the project is that students will be able to describe the importance of being an active and informed voter and will make plans to become voters when they reach age eighteen.